Self-Advocacy

Module 6

Transition Roundtables November 18 & 19, 2008

Introduction

- Self-advocacy is an individual's ability to effectively communicate, convey, negotiate, or assert his or her own interests, desires, needs, and rights
- Self-advocacy involves making informed decisions and taking responsibility for those decisions

Instruction should include...

- Assertive behavior
- Communication
- Decision-making skills
- Goal setting and attainment
- Leadership skills
- Legal and citizenship rights and responsibilities
- Public speaking skills
- Transition planning
- Use of community resources

Assessment of needed skills

- Observation
- · How many of the previous skills does the student demonstrate?
- · How often and in which environments does the student demonstrate the skills?
- How well does he demonstrate the skills?
- Handouts
 - Self-advocacy Questionnaire
- Things I would Like To See In My Transition Plan
- · Assertiveness Self-Assessment

Strategies to teach self-advocacy skills

- Teach and provide opportunities to practice
 - · Being assertive but not aggressive
 - · How to communicate effectively in one-on-one, small-group, large-group situations
 - · How to negotiate, compromise, and use persuasion
 - · How to be an effective listener
 - · How to navigate through systems and bureaucracies
- Handouts
- Assertion
- · Role Playing Assertive Behavior

Facilitate student involvement

- > School and community clubs and organizations
- Implement the Adaptability Model (see Module 5)
- Student-directed IEP programs
 - · ChoiceMaker Self-Determination Transition Curriculum
 - · Whose Future Is It Anyway?
 - . DO IT!
 - · D Define the problem
 - · O Outline your options
 - I Identify the outcome of each option
 T Take action

 - ! Get excited!

Identify any ineffective communication skills

- Frequent silences following a conversation partner's questions or statements
- Short, abrupt responses
- Frequent interruptions
- Off-topic responses
- Inappropriate tone, e.g., making a joke in response to a partner's expressed concern or
- Mumbling or otherwise unintelligible responses

Teach effective communication skills

- > Voice tone, volume, intonation, inflection
- Effective conversation skills
 - Responding to a question or statement with a relevant answer or statement
 - · Initiating conversations at appropriate times
- Appropriate turn taking
- Showing continued interest in a conversation by employing brief speech acknowledgers, e.g., "yes, I see" or "right"
- Non-verbal communication skills
 - Eye contact
 - Facial expressions
 - Body language
 - personal space

Activity:

 Complete the Assertiveness Self-assessment from the handouts